

B. Boyce
THE
VANITY

OF
THOUGHTS
DISCOVERED:

WITH
THEIR DANGER
AND CVRE.

BY
THO: GOODWIN, B.D.

L O N D O N,
Printed by *M. F.* for *R. Dowlman*, and
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AND COVER



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Printed by M. J. B. [illegible]
at the [illegible] of [illegible]
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THE
VANITIE
OF
THOUGHTS.

JEREM. 4. 14.

*How long shall thy vaine
thoughts lodge within
thee?*

IN these words
hee compares
the heart unto
some house of
common resort, made as
B it

it were with many and large roomes to entertain and lodge multitudes of Guests in ; into which, before conversion , all the vaine, light, wanton, prophane, dissolute thoughts, that poste up and cowne the World (as your thoughts doe) and runne ryot all the day, have free, open accesse, the heart keeps open house to them, gives them willing, cheerful welcome, and entertainment ; accompanies them, travels o're all the world for the daintiest pleasures to feed them with ; *Lodgeth*, harbours them, and there they, like unruly Gallants, and roysterers, lodge, and revell day

day and night, and defile
those rooms they lodge
in, with their loathsome
filth and vomits. How long,
sayes the Lord, shall they
lodge therein? Will I
with my Spirit, my Son,
and traine of graces, stand
at the doore and knock, Rev.
3. 20. and cannot finde
admittance, of all which
filthinesse, &c. the heart
this house must be washed;
wash thy heart from wicked-
nesse. Wash, not swept
onely of grosser evils (as
Matth. 12. 43. the house,
(the unclean spirit re-en-
ters into) is said to bee
swept of evils that lay
loose and uppermost) but
wash, and cleanse of those
defilements which sticke

more close, and are incorporated, and wrought in, into the Spirit. And 2. those *vaine* and unruly guests must be turned out of doores, without any warning, they have staid there long enough; too long; *How long?* and the *time past may suffice*, as the Apostle speaks, they must lodge there no more. The house the soule is not in conversion to bee puld downe, but onely these guests turned out; and though kept out they cannot be, they will still enter whilst wee are in these houses of clay, yet lodge they must not: if thoughts of anger and revenge come in, in the morning or day

day time, they must bee
turned out e're night, *Let
not the Sunne goe downe up-
on your wrath, Ephe. 4. 26.*

For so you may come to
lodge yet a worser guest
in your heart with them:
Give not place to the Devil,
(for it follows) who will
bring seven worse with him.

If uncleane thoughts offer
to come to bed to thee,
when thou liest downe, let
them not lodge with thee.

To conclude, it is not
what thoughts are in your
hearts, and passe through
them, as what lodging
they have, that doth diffe-
rence your repentance:
many good thoughts and
motions may passe, as
Strangers thorow a bad

mans heart; and so likewise multitudes of vaine thoughts may make a thoroughfare of a beleevers heart; and disturbe him in good duties; by knockings and interruptions, and breakings in upon the heart of a good man; but still they lodge not there; are not fostered, harboured.

My scope in our ordinary course is, to discover the wickednesse and vanitie of the heart by nature: in the heart we are yet but in the upper parts of it, the understanding, and the defilements thereof, which are to bee washt out of it, and the next defilement, which in my broken order

der I meane to handle, is that which is here specified, *the vanitie of your thoughts*: for the discovery sake of which onely, I chose this text, as my ground; *That* is it, therefore, which I will chiefly insist upon. A subject which, I confesse, would prove of all else the vastest. To make an exact particular discovery of the vanities in our thoughts, to travell over the whole Creation, and to take a survey, and give an account of all that vanitie abounds in all the creatures, was (as you know) the taske of the wisest of men, *Solomon*; the flowre of his studies

and labours: But the *vanitie of our thoughts*, are as multiplied much in us, this *little world* affoords more varieties of vanities, than the Great. Our thoughts made the *creatures subject to vanitie*, *Rom. 8. 20.* therefore themselves are subject to vanity much more. In handling of them I will shew you; 1. what is meant by *Thoughts*. 2. *What by vanity*. 3. *That our thoughts are vaine*. 4. Wherein that vanity doth consist, both in the generall, and some particulars.

First, what is *meant by thoughts*, especially as they are the intended subject of this discourse, which

which in so vast an argument I must necessarily set limits unto: 1. by *thoughts*, the Scriptures do comprehend all the *internal* acts of the minde of man, of what facultie soever, all those reasonings, consultations, purposes, resolutions, intents, ends, desires, and cares of the minde of man, as opposed to our *external* words and actions, so *Isay* 66.18. All acts are divided into those two, *I know their workes and their thoughts*: what is transacted within the minde is called the *thoughts*; what thereof do manifest themselves, and breake out in actions, are called *workes*.

And so Genes. 6. 5. Every imagination of the thoughts, (*omne figmentum*) all the creatures the minde frames within it self, purposes, desires, &c. (as it is noted in the margin) are evil; where by thoughts are understood all that comes within the minde, (as Ezech. 11. 5. the phrase is) and so indeed we vulgarly use it, and understand it, so To remember a man, is, to thinke of him, Gen. 40. 14. to have purposed a thing, wee say, I thought to doe it. To take care about a busines, is to take thoughts, 1 Sam. 9. 5. And the reason, why all may thus bee called the thoughts, is, because indeed

deed, all affections, desires, purposes, are stirred up by thoughts, bred, fomented, and nourished by them: no one thought passeth, but it stirreth some affection of feare, joy, care, grief, &c. No, although they are thus *largely* taken here, yet I intend not to handle the *vanity* of them in so large a sense at present: I must confine my selfe, as strictly as may be, to the vanitie of that, which is more *properly* called the *thinking, meditating, considering power of man*, which is in his understanding or spirit, that being the subject I have in hand: *Thoughts* not being in this sense opposed one-ly

ly to *your workes*, but unto purposes and intents, so *Hebr. 4. 12.* as the *Soule* and *spirit*, so thoughts and intents seeme to be opposed. And *Iob 20. 2, 3.* *Thoughts* are appropriated to the *Spirit of understanding*. And againe yet more strictly, for in the understanding I mean not to speake of, generally, all thoughts therein, neither, as not of the *reasonings* or *deliberations* in our actions: but those *musings* onely in the *Speculative* part.

And so, I can no otherwise expresse them to you, than thus. Those same first, more *simple conceits*, *apprehensions* that arise;

arise; those *fancies, meditations*, which the understanding by the *helpe of fancie frames within it self of things*; those whereon your mindes ponder and pore, and muse upon things, these I meane by *thoughts*, I meane those *talkings* of our miades with the things we know, as the Scripture calls it, *Prov. 6. 22.* those same parleys, enterviews, chat-tings, the minde hath with the things let into it, with the things we feare, with the things wee love. For all these things our mindes make their companions, and our thoughts hold them discourse, and have a thousand conceits about

about them; this I meane
by *thoughts*. For besides
that *reasoning* power, *deli-*
berating power, whereby
we aske our selves conti-
nually, *what shall wee doe?*
and whereby wee reason
and discusse things, which
is a more inward closet,
the Cabinet and privie
councell of the heart,
there is a more outward
lodging, that presence
chamber, which enter-
taines all commers, which
is the *thinking, meditating,*
*musi*ng power in man,
which suggesteth matter
for deliberations, and con-
sultations, and reasonings,
which holds the *objects* till
we view them, which en-
tertaineth all that come to
speake

speake with any of our affections.

2. I adde, which *the minde frames within it self*, so the Scripture exprefeth their originall to us, and their maner of rifing, *Prov. 6. 14. Frowardnes is in his heart, fabricatur, he forgeth mifchiefe, as a Smith doth Iron, hammers it out : and the thoughts are the materi-alls of this frowardnesse in us; upon all the things which are presented to us, the minde begets fome thoughts, imaginations on them; and as lusts, fo thoughts are conceived, Iames 1. Ifay 59. 4. They conceive mifchiefe, and bring forth iniquitie, and hatch*

hatch Cockatrice egges, and weave Spiders webbs. And verse 7. hee instanceth in thoughts of iniquity, because our thoughts are spanne out of our owne hearts, are egges of our owne laying, though the things presented to us bee from without.

And this I adde to sever them from such thoughts as are injected, and cast in, onely from without, which are children of anothers begetting, and often laid out of doores: such as are blasphemous thoughts cast in by Satan, wherein if the soule bee meereely passive, (as the word *Buffetting* implies, 2 Cor. 12. 7.) they are none of

of your thoughts, but his; wherein a man is but as one in a roome with another, where he heares another sweare and curse, but cannot get out from him; such thoughts, if they bee onely *from without*, defile not a man. For *nothing defiles a man, but what comes from within*, Matth. 15. 18, 19. or which the heart hath begotten upon it by the devil, as thoughts of uncleannes, &c. Wherein though he be the father, yet the heart is the mother and wombe; and therefore accordingly they affect the heart, as naturall children doe, and by that we may distinguish them from the other, namely, when

when we have a soft heart,
an inward love unto them,
so that our hearts do kisse
the child; then they are
our *thoughts*, or else when
the heart broods upon
these egges, then they are
our *thoughts*, though they
come from without.

Though this is to bee
added, that even those
thoughts, wherein the
soule is passive, and which
Satan casts in, which wee
do no wayes owne, where-
in he *ravisheth* the heart,
rather than *begets* them
on us, (if there be not any
consent to them in us,
then it is but a *Rape*, as in
law it is not) I yeeld
those thoughts are punish-
ments often of neglect of
our

our thoughts, and of our suffering them to wander; as *Dinah*, because she went cunningly out, to view the *Daughters of the Land*, was taken and ravish't, though against her will: yet it was a punishment of her curiosity: or else they are the punishment of the neglect of good motions of the spirit; which resisting, we thereby grieve him, and so he deales with us, as wee with our children, suffers us to be scared with bug-beares, and to bee grieved by *Satan*, that wee may learne what it is to neglect him, and harbour vanity. Lastly, I adde, which the minde, *in and by it selfe*, or by the helpe of fancy

fancy, thus begets and entertaines, because there are no thoughts or likenesses of things at any time in our fancies, but at the same time they are in the understanding also reflected unto it: As when two Looking-glasses are placed opposite and nigh each to other, looke what species appears in the one, doe also in the other.

Secondly, let us see what *vanitie* is, take it in all the acceptations of it; It is true of our *thoughts* that they are *vaine*.

1. It is taken for *unprofitablenesse*. So Eccles. 1. 2, 3. *All is vanity*, because there is no profit in them
under

under the Sunne, such are our thoughts by nature, the wisest of them will not stand us in any stead in time of need, in time of temptation, distresse of conscience, day of death or Judgement, 1 Cor. 2. 6.

All the wisdom of the wise comes to nought, Pro. 10. 20. The heart of the wicked is little worth, not a penny for them all, whereas the thoughts of a godly man are his treasure. Out of the good treasure of his heart, hee brings them forth. He mints them, and they are laid up as his riches. Psal. 138. 17. How precious are they? he there speakes of our thoughts of God,

God, as the object of them
thy thoughts, that is, (of
thee) are precious.

2. *Vanitie* is taken for
lightnesse. *Lighter than
vanity* is a phrase used.
Psal. 62:9. and whom is it
spoken of? of men, and if
anything in them be *ligh-
ter* than other, it is their
thoughts which swim in
the uppermost parts, float
at the top, is as the scum
of the heart; when all the
best and wisest, and dee-
pest, and solideest *thoughts*
in *Balthazar* a Prince,
were weighed, they were
found too light, *Dan. 5:17.*

3. *Vanity* is put for fol-
ly. So *Prov. 12:11.* *Vaine
men*, is made all one with
men voide of understan-
ding.

ding. Such are our thoughts among other evils which are said to come out of the heart, Mark. 7. 22. *ἀποκαρῶν* is reckoned as one, foolishnesse, that is, thoughts that are such as mad men have, and fooles, nothing to the purpose, of which there can be made no use, which a man knowes not whence they should come, nor whither they would, without dependance.

4. It is put for Inconstancy, and frailty, therefore vanity and a shadow are made *Synonomaes*, Psa. 144. 4. such are our thoughts, flitting and perishing, as bubbles. Ps. 146. 4. All their thoughts perish.

Lastly,

Lastly, they are *vaine*, that is, indeed, *wicked* and *sinfull*; *vanity* in the text here, is yoaked with *wickednesse*: and *vaine men*, and *sonnes of Belial* are all one, 2 *Chron.* 13. 17. And such are our thoughts by nature. *Prov.* 24. 9. *The thought of foolishnesse is sinne.* And therefore a man is to be humbled for a *proud thought*, *Prov.* 30. 32. For so *laying hand* on the mouth is taken, as *Iob* 39. 37. for being *vile* in a mans owne eyes.

And because this is the sense I chiefly must insist on, in handling the *vanity of the thoughts*, and also men usually thinke that *thoughts* are free; I will there.

therefore prove this to you, which is the onely doctrine raised, that *Thoughts are sinnes.*

1. The Law judgeth them, *Hebr. 4. 12. rebukes a man* for them, *1 Cor. 14. 25.* and therefore they are transgressions of the law: and so also did Christ rebuke the Pharisees for *their ill thoughts, Matth. 9. 4.* which argues the excellency of the Law, that reacheth thoughts.

2. Because they are *Capable of pardon*, and must be pardoned, or wee cannot be saved, *Acts 8. 22.* which argues the multitudes of Gods compassions; seeing thoughts are so infinite.

C

3. They

3. They are to bee *repented of*, yea repentance is expressed, as to begin at them. So *Esay 55, 7. Let the unrighteous man forsake his thoughts*; and a man is never truly and thoroughly wrought on, (as *2 Cor. 10. 4, 5, till every thought bee brought into obedience*; which argues that they are naturally rebellious, and contrary to grace. And this also argueth the *Power of grace*, which is able to rule, and to subdue so great an Army as our thoughts are, and command them all, as one day it will doe, when wee are perfectly holy.

4. *They defile the man*: which nothing defiles but sinne,

sinne, *Matth. 15. 15, 16, 17.* Out of the heart proceed evill thoughts, these defile the man.

5. They are an abomination to the Lord, who hates nothing but sinne, and whose pure eyes can endure to behold no iniquitie, *Prov. 15. 16.* as good Meditations are acceptable, *Psal. 25. ult.* so, by the rule of contrary, bad are abominable.

6. They hinder all good we should doe, and spoile our best performances. Vaine thoughts draw the heart away in them, that when a man should draw nigh to God, his Heart, by reason of his thoughts, is farre off from him, *Esay*

29. 16. *A mans heart goes after his covetousnesse,* when he should heare, as the Prophet speakes, because his thoughts thus run. Now nothing else but sinne could separate, and what doth estrange us from God, is sinne, and enmity to him.

7. Our thoughts are the *first motioners of all the evil in us.* For they make the motion, and also bring the heart and object together; are panders to our lusts, hold up the object, till the heart hath plaid the adulterer with it, and committed folly, so in speculative uncleannes, & in other lusts, they hold up the images of those gods,

gods they create, which the heart falls downe and worships; they present credit, riches, beauty, till the heart hath worshipt them, and this when the things themselves are absent.

To come now to those *Particulars* wherein this *vanity* of the *thinking*, meditating power of the minde consists.

First I will discover it in regard of *thinking what is good*, how unable and loth, &c. it is to good thoughts, and secondly in regard of the readines of it to *thinke of evill and vaine things*.

For the first, first in a *want of ability* ordinarily, and naturally to raise and

extract holy and usefull considerations & thoughts from all ordinary occurrences, and occasions; which the minde, so farre as it is sanctified, is apt unto. A heart sanctified, and in whose affections true grace is enkindled, out of all Gods dealings with him, out of the things he sees and heares, out of all the objects are put into the thoughts he distilleth holy, and sweet, and usefull meditations: and it naturally doth it, and ordinarily doth it, so farre as it is sanctified. So our Saviour *Christ*, all speeches of others which he heard, all accidents and occurrences did still raise and occasion
in

in him heavenly meditations, as we may see throughout the whole Gospels: when he came by a well, hee speakes of the *Water of life*, *Iohn 4*, &c. Many instances might bee given; *He* in his thoughts translated the book of the creatures, into the booke of grace, and so did *Adams* heart in innocency: his *Philosophie* might be truly termed *Divinity*, because he saw God in all; all raised up his heart to thankfulnessse and praise: So now in like manner our mindes, so farre as they are sanctified, will doe. As the *Philosophers stone* turnes all Metals into Gold; As the Bee suckes honey out

of every flower, and a good stomack sucks out some sweet and wholesome nourishment out of what it takes unto it selfe: so doth a holy heart, so farre as sanctified, convert and digest all into spiritual usefull thoughts; this you may see, *Psalm. 107. ult.* *That Psalme* gives many instances of Gods providence, *and wonderfull works which hee doth for the sons of men*; as deliverances by Sea, where men see his wonders: deliverance to Captives, &c. and still the foot of the Song is, *Oh that men would therefore praise the Lord for: he wonderfull workes hee doth for the Sons of men.* Now, after

after all these instances, hee concludes, that though others passe over such occurrences with ordinarie slight thoughts, yet sayes hee, *The righteous shall see it, and rejoyce*: that is, extract comfortable thoughts out of all, which shall be matter of joy, and *who so is wise will observe these things*, that is, makes holy observations out of all these, and out of a principle of wisdom hee understands Gods goodnes in all, and so his heart is raised to thoughts of praise, and thankfulness, and obedience. Now compare with this the 92. Psalm. made for the Sab-

bath (when in imitation of God, who that day viewed his workes, wee are, on our *Lords day*, still to raise holy praisefull thoughts out of them to his glory, which hee that penned that *Psalme* then did, *ver. 1. and 2. and ver. 5. How great are thy workes, &c!* *A brutish man knows not, nor will a foole understand this*: that is, hee being a beast, and having no sanctified principle of wisdom in him, lookes no further than a beast into all the works of God, and occurrences of things; lookes on all blessings as things provided for mans delight by God: but hee extracts seldome holy spiritu.

rituall and useful thoughts out of all, he wants the art of doing it.

If injuries be offered us by others, what doe our thoughts distill out of those wrongs, but thoughts of revenge? we meditate how to requite it againe. But see how naturally *Dauids* minde distills other thoughts of *Shemeis* cursing, 2 Sam. 16. 11. *God hath bidden him*, and it may prove a good signe of Gods favor. *God may requite good for it.* when we see judgements befall others, severe thoughts of censure our mindes are apt to raise against our brother, as *Iobs* friends did. But a godly man

man whose minde is much sanctified, raiseth other thoughts out of it, *Prov.* 21. 22. *Wisely considers, &c.*

So when outward mercies befall us, the next thoughts wee are apt to have, is to project ease by our wealth, *thou hast goods for many yeares:* and when judgements befall us, we are apt to be fill'd with thoughts of complaint, and feares, and cares how to winde out againe. But what were the first thoughts *Iob* had, upon the newes of the losse of all? *God hath given, and the Lord hath taken, blessed be the Lord for all.*

Such thoughts as these
(which

(which all opportunities hint unto) a good heart is apprehensive of, and doth naturally raise for its own use. So farre *Barren as our thoughts are* , so farre *vaine.*

Secondly, the *vanitie*, and sinfulness of the minde appeares in a *loathnesse to entertaine holy thoughts*, to begin to set it selfe to thinke of God, and the things belonging unto our peace ; even as loath they are to this as Schoole-boyes are to goe to their Books, or to busie their mindes about their lessons, their heads being full of play ; so loath are our mindes to enter into serious considerations, in-
to

to sad solemne thoughts of God, or death, &c. Men are as loath to thinke of *death*, as theeves of the *execution*; or to thinke of *God*, as they are of their Judge. So to goe over their owne actions, in a review of them, and read the blurd writing of their hearts, and to *commune with them*, at night in the end of the day, (as *David* did, *Psalme*. 119. 59.) men are as loath to doe this, as Schoole-boyes are to perse their lessons, and the false Latins they have made, *Iob* 21. *Depart from us* (say they in *Iob*) unto God, from their thoughts they meant it, for it follows, *we desire not the*

the knowledge of thy wayes.

They would not thinke of him, or know them by their good wills; and therefore our mindes, like a bad stomack, are nauseated with the very scent of good things, and soone casts them up againe,

1 Rom. 28. They like not to retaine the knowledge of God: let us goe and try to wind up our soules, at any time, to holy meditations, to thinke of what we have heard, or what wee have done, or what is our duty to doe, and wee shall finde our minds, like the peggs of an Instrument, slip betweene our fingers, as wee are a winding them up, and to fall downe suddenly againe,

gaine, e're we are aware of it: yea you shall finde, that your mindes will labour to shun what may occasion such thoughts; even as men goe out of the way, when they see they must meet with one they are loath to speake withall; yea men dare not be alone, for feare such thoughts should returne upon them. The best shall find a gladnesse, for an excuse, by other occasions to knocke off their thoughts from what is good: whereas in thinking of vaine earthly things, we thinke the time passeth too fast, clocks strike too soone, houres passe away e're we are aware of it.

Third.

Thirdly, the *vanity* and
sinfulnesse of the minde
appeares in the godly,
that though they enter-
taine good thoughts, yet
the minde is not, will not
be *long intent* on them.
Some things there are,
which we are, and can be
intent upon, and accor-
dingly dwell long upon
them, and therefore in
Iob 17. 11. The thoughts
are called the *possessions of*
the heart, (so 'tis in the o-
riginall, and noted in the
margin) such thoughts as
are pleasing, the heart
dwells on them; yea so
intent are we often, that
they hinder our sleepe: as
'tis said of wicked men,
They cannot sleepe for mul-
titude

of thoughts, Eccles. 5. 12. So, to devise froward things, Solomon sayes, Prov. 16. 30. That a man shuts his eyes, that is, is exceeding attentive, poreth upon his plots; for so a man doth use to do, to shut his eyes when hee would be intent, and therefore it is so expressed. But now let the minde be occupied and busied about good things, and things belonging to our peace, how unsteady is it? which things should yet draw out the intention of the minde: For the more excellent the object is, the stronger our intention should bee. God is the most glorious object our mindes can fasten

sten on, the most alluring.
The thought of whom
therefore should swallow
up all other, as not wor-
thy to bee scene the same
day with him : But I ap-
peale to all your experi-
ences, if your thoughts of
him be not most unsteady,
and are, (that I may so
compare it) as when wee
looke upon a Starre thro-
row an Optique glasse,
held with a palsie shaking
hand : It is long ere wee
can bring our mindes to
have ken of him, to place
our eyes upon him, and
when wee have, how doe
our hands shake, and so
loose sight ever and anon?
So whilst we are in never
so serious talke with him,
when

when all things else should stand without, and not dare to offer entrance, till wee have done with him, yet how many chinkes are there in the heart, at which other thoughts come in? and our minds leave God, and follow them, and *goe after our covetousnesse*, our credit, &c. as the Prophets phrase is, *Ezech. 33.* So when we are hearing the Word, how do our minds ever and anon run out of the Church, and come in againe, and so doe not heare halfe that is said? So when when wee are at our callings, which God bids us to bee conversant about with all our might, *Eccles. 9. 10.* yet our mindes

mindes like idle truants, or negligent servants, though sent about never so serious a businesse, yet go out of the way to see any sport, run after the Hares that crosse the way, follow after Butter-flies that buzze about us.

And so when we come to pray, Christ bids *watch to prayer*, *Mark 13.33.* that is, as if we were at every dore to place a guard that none come in and disturbe and knock us off. But how oft doth the heart nod, and fall asleepe, and run into another world, as men in dreames doe? Yea so naturall are distractions to us, when we are busied about holy duties, that as
excre-

excrements come from men, when very weak and sick, ere they are aware of it ; so doe worldly thoughts from us, and we are carried out of that streame of good our mind was running in, into some by-creek ere we are aware of it.

Fourthly, the *vanity* of the minde appeares, in regard of *good* things, that if it doth thinke of them, yet it doth it *unseasonably*. It is with your thoughts as with your speeches, their goodnes lies in their placing and order, *Prov. 25. 11. If fitly spoken, they are as Apples of Gold in pictures of Silver.* And as a man is to bring forth actions,

actions, so thoughts in *due season*; as those *fruits*, so these *buds* should come out in *season*, *Psal. i.* Now the vanity of the minde appeares in thinking of some good things, sometimes unseasonably; when you are praying, you should not onely have no worldly thoughts come in, but no other than praying thoughts. But then haply some notions of, or for a Sermon will come readily in: so in hearing, a man shall often have good thoughts that are heterogeneous to the thing in hand; So when a man is falling downe to prayer, looke what thing a man had forgotten, when it should

should have been thought of, will then come in, or what will affect a man much comes in to divert him. This *misplacing of thoughts* (suppose they be good) is yet from a vanity of the minde; did those thoughts come at another time, they should be welcome: we finde our minds ready to spend thoughts about any thing, rather than what God at present calls unto. When we go to a Sermon, we finde wee could then spend our thoughts more willingly about reading, or happily searching our hearts; unto which at another time, when call'd to it, wee should be most unwilling to

to. We could be content to run wild over the fields of meditations & miscellaneous thoughts, though about good, rather than to bee tyed to that taske, and kept in one set path.

In *Adam* and *Christ* no thought was misplaced, but though they were as *many* as the *Starres*, yet they marched in their *courses*, and kept their ranks. But ours, as *Meteors*, dance up and downe in us. And this *disorder* is a *vanity* and *sinne*, be the thought materially never so good. Not every one that hath the best part must therefore first step up the Stage to act, but take his right cue. In

D

Prin-

Printing, let the letters be never so faire, yet if not placed in their order, and rightly composed, they marre the sense. Souldiers upon no termes should breake their ranks; so nor should our thoughts, *Pro. 16.3.* There is a promise to a *Righteous man*, that (as some read it) *his thoughts shall be ordered.*

And so much for the first part, *The privative sinfulness* in our thoughts, in respect of *what is good.*

Now secondly I proceed to discover that *positive vanity*, which appeareth in our thoughts; in regard of *what is evill.* And here it is not to be expected, nor indeed can
it

it bee performed by any man, to reckon up the severall particularities of all those vaine thoughts which run through mans heart; I will insist onely on some more generall discoveries, to which particulars may bee reduced for a taste of the rest.

First, the *vanity* of them discovers it selfe, in that which Christ calls, *Mark 7. 22. apportion, foolishnesse*: that is, such thoughts as mad men have, and fooles; which *foolishnesse* is seene, both in that unsettled wantonnesse and *unstayednesse* of the minde in thinking, that like quick-silver it cannot fixe, but as *Solomon* sayes, *Pro.*

17. 24. *A fooles eyes are in the ends of the earth, are garish, and runne up and downe from one end of the earth to the other, shooting and streaming, as those Mercors you see sometimes in the ayre. And though indeed the minde of man is nimble and able thus to run from one end of the earth to another, (which is its strength and excellency) yet God would not have this strength and nimblenesse, and metall-spirit in curvetting and tumbling, (as I may call it) but in steady directing all our thoughts straight on to his glory, our owne salvation, and the good of others;*

thers ; he gave it this nimbleness to turne away from evill, and the first appearance of it. As we are to walke in Gods wayes hee calls us to, so every thought, as well as every action is a step : and therefore ought to bee steady, *Make straight steps to your feet*, sayes the Apostle, *Hebr. 12. 13.* turning not to the right hand, nor to the left, untill we come to the journeys end of that businesse wee are to think of. But our thoughts, at best, are as wanton Spaniels, who though indeed they go with, and accompany their Master, and come to their journeys end with him in the end,

yet doe runne after every Bird, and wildly pursue every flock of sheep they see. This unsteadinesse, it ariseth from the like curse on the minde of *Man*, as was on *Caine*, that it being driven from the presence of the Lord, it proves a vagabond, and so mens eyes are in the ends of the earth.

This foolishnesse or ~~disproportion~~ is also scene in that *Independence* in our thoughts; they hanging oft together as ropes of sand; this we see more evidently in dreames: And not onely then, but when awake also, and *that*, when we would set our selves to be most serious, how doe our thoughts jangle and ring

ring back-ward? and as wanton Boyes, when they take pens in their hands, scribble broken words that have no dependence. Thus doe our thoughts: and if you would but looke over the copies thereof, which you write continually, you would finde as much nonsense in your thoughts, as you find in mad mens speeches. This madnes and distemper is in the minde since the fall (though it appears not in our words, because we are wiser) that if notes were taken of our thoughts, we should finde thoughts so vagrant, that wee know not how they come in, nor whence they

came, nor whither they would. But as *God* doth *all things* in *weight*, *number*, and *measure*, so doth his Image in us, so farre as it is renewed. And, by reason of these two, the *folly*, *unsettlednesse*, and *independance* of our thoughts, wee bring our thoughts often to no issue, to no perfection, but wander away our time in *thinking* (as you use to say) *of nothing*, and as *Seneca* sayes of mens *lives*, as of Ships that are tost up and downe at Sea, it may bee said they have beene *tossed much*, but *sayled nothing*. The like in this respect may bee said of the thoughts, or as when
men

men make imperfect dashes, and write nonsense, *They are said to scribble, they doe not write* : So, in these follies and independencies, we wilder and loose our selves, *we doe not thinke.*

But 2. on the contrary if any *strong lust*, or violent passion be up, then our thoughts are *too fixed and intent*, and run in so farre into such sinfull objects, that they cannot bee puld out againe, or any way diverted or taken off: which is another vanity. For our thoughts and our understanding part was ordained to moderate, allay, and coole, and take off our passions, when they are a

playing over, to rule and governe them. But now our thoughts are themselves subjected to our affections, and like fuell put under them, doe but make them boile the more. And although our thoughts doe first stir up our feares, joyes, desires, &c. yet these being stirred up once, chaine, and fixe, and hold our thoughts to those objects, so as wee cannot loosenthem again. Therefore sayes Christ to his Disciples, *Why are you troubled, and why doe thoughts arise in your hearts?* For perturbations in the affections cause thoughts like fumes and vapoursto ascend. Thus
if

if a *passion of feare* be up,
how doth it conjure up
multitude of ghostly
thoughts which wee can-
not conjure down againe,
nor hide our eyes from?
But which haunt us, and
follow us up and downe,
where-ever we goe, so as
a man runnes away pursu-
ed by his owne thoughts,
the heart then meditates on
terror: As *Isay* 33.18. So
when sorrow is up, how
doth it make us study the
crosse that lights upon us?
which to forget, would
be an ease unto the mind.
But a mans passions makes
his thoughts to con it, and
to say it by heart, over
and over againe, as if it
would not have us forget
it.

it. So when *love* and *desire* is up, be the thing what it will, we are taken with, as preferment, credit, beauty, riches, it sets our thoughts a worke to view the thing all over, from top to toe (as wee say) to observe every part and circumstance, that doth make it amiable unto us: as if a picture were to bee drawn of it. So when *joy* is up, wee view the thing we rejoyce in, and read it over and over, as wee doe a Booke we like, and wee marke every tittle, we are punctuall in it; yea so inordinate are we herein, as often we cannot sleep for thinking on them. *Eccles.* 5.12. *Abundance of riches will*

will not suffer him to sleepe,
for the multitude of
thoughts in his head, spea-
king of a man who is co-
vetous: how do thoughts
trouble the *Belshazzers*
and *Nebuchadonezers* of
the world? *Dan. 4. 19,*
so *Prov. 4. 16.* They
sleepe not unlesse they have
done mischief, if their de-
sires remaine unsatisfied,
they doe disturbe their
thoughts, like froward
children by their crying:
so as, often, these which
men count free (as the
most doe thoughts) doe
prove the greatest bon-
dage and torment in the
earth unto them, and doe
hinder sleepe, the nurse of
nature, eate out, and live
upon

upon the heart that bred them, wearie the spirits, that when a man *shall say* (as *Iob 7. 13.*) *My bed shall comfort mee*, by putting a parenthesis to his thoughts, and sad discourses, which he hath when awake, yet then they haunt a man; and as *vers. 14. terrifie him.* A man cannot lay them aside as he doth his cloake: and when men die they will follow them to hell, and torment them worse there; your thoughts are one of the greatest executioners there, even the *worm that dies not.*

Thirdly, the *vanitie* of the minde appears in *curiosity* a longing and itching

ing to be fed with, and to know (and then delighting to thinke of) things that do not at all concerne us. Take an experiment of this in Schollers (whose chiefe worke lyes in this shop) how many precious thoughts are spent this way? as in curiositie of knowledge, as appeares by those the Apostle often rebukes, that affect, as *1 Tim. 6. 4, 20. oppositions of science falsely so call'd curiosities of knowledge of things they have not seene.* So *Col. 2.* and *1 Tim. 4. 7.* he calls such issues of mens braines, they dore on *old wives fables*; because as fables please old wives, so doe these

these their mindes, and of that itch they have in them, even as women with child, in their longings, content not themselves with what the place affords, or the season, with what may be had; but often long after some unheard of rarity, far fetcht, or, it may be, not at all to bee had: Thus men not contenting themselves with the wonders of God discovered in the depth of his Word and Works, they will launch into another Sea, and world of their owne making, and there they sayle with pleasure, as many of the Schoole-men did in some of their speculations, *spen-*

spending their pretious wits in framing curious webs out of their owne bowels.

Take another instance also in others, who have leisure and parts to read much, they should ballast their hearts with the Word, and take in those more pretious words of wisdom and sound knowledge to profit themselves and others, and to build up their owne soules, and whereby they may be enabled to serve their Country: but now what doe their curious fancies carry them unto, to bee versed in, but Play-books, jearing Pasquils, Roman-fes, fained itayes, which
are

are the curious needle-
worke of idle braines, so
as they load their heads
with *Apes and Peacocks*
feathers, instead of pearles
and pretious stones ; so as
a man may say as *Solomon*,
Prov. 15. 14. The heart of
him that hath understand-
ing seeketh knowledge, but
the mouth of fooles feeds on
foolishnesse. Foolish dis-
courses please their eares
and eyes to read : all these
being but purveyors (as it
were) for food, for the
thoughts, like *Camelions*
men live on ayre and
winde.

To leave them, how
doe others out of meere
curiosity to know and
please their thoughts, li-
sten

sten after all the news that
flies up and downe the
world, scum all the froth
that floats in foolish mens
mouths, and please them-
selves onely with talking,
thinking , and hearing
of it.

I doe not condemne all
herein : some their ends
are good , and they can
make use of it, and doe as
Nehemiah did, who inquired
how things went at
Ierusalem, to rejoyce with
Gods people, and mourne
with them, and pray for
them, and to know how
to fashion their prayers
accordingly. But I con-
demne that curious itch
that is in men, when it is
done, but meerly to please
their

their fancies, wich is much delighted with new things, though they concerne us not ; such the Athenians were, *Acts* 17. 21. How doe some men long all the weeke, till they heare events and issues, and make it a great part of the happinesse of their lives, to study the state more than their own hearts, and affaires of their callings : who take actions of state as their text to study the meaning of, and to preach on where-ever they come. I speake of those that yet lay not to heart the miseries of the Church of Christ, nor helpe them with their prayers, if at any time

time they happen.

The like curiosity is
seene in many, in desiring
to know the secrets of o-
ther men, which yet
would doe them no good
to know, and who doe stu-
dy mens actions and ends,
not to reforme, or doe
good to them, but to
know them, and think and
muse thereof, when alone,
with pleasure; this is curi-
osity, and properly a va-
nity of the thinking pow-
er, which it mainly plea-
seth; and is indeed a great
sin, when much of mens
most pleasing thoughts
are spent on things con-
cerne them not. For the
things we ought to know,
and which doe concerne
us,

us, are enough to take up
all our thoughts alone,
neither shall we have any
to spare : and thoughts
are pretious things, the
immediate fruits and
buds of an immortall na-
ture, and God hath given
us power to coyne them,
to lay them out in things
concerne our owne good,
and of our neighbours,
and his owne glory : and
thus not to spend them is
the greatest waste in the
world ; examine what
Corne you put in to grind,
for God ought to have
toll of all. *Prov. 24. 8.*
He that deviseth evill shall
be called a mischievous per-
son, not alwaies hee that
doth a mischievous acti-
on,

on, but that deviseth it:
and *vers. 9.* he aggravates
it, *à minori*, for every
thought is sinne, then a
combination and conspi-
racie of wicked thoughts
is much more.

But 4. there is a worse
vanity than this, and that
is that intimated, *Rom. 13.*
ult. Taking thought to ful-
fill the lusts of the flesh,
πρωταυ ποινδου [To make
projects for it.] For
thoughts are the Caterers
for our lusts, and lay in all
their provision, they are
they that looke out where
the best markets are, the
best opportunities for sin-
ning in any kind, the best
bargaines for credit, for
preferment, for riches, &c.
For

For example, would a man rise? his thoughts study the art of it, men frame their owne ladder to climbe withall, invent wayes how to doe it, though often it proves as to *Haman* their own Gallows. Would they bee rich? what doe they study? even all cheats and tricks on the Cards, (as I may so speake) that is, all the cunning tricks of the world, all the waies of oppressing, defrauding, and going beyond their brethren, so to pack things in all their dealings, that they themselves shall bee the winners, and those that deale with them, the losers, *Isay* 32. 7. It is said

said that the Instruments of the churlish are evill, and hee deviseth wicked devices to destroy the poore: would a man undermine his opposite, as one that stands in his light, and who hinders his credit? he'll digge and fall a pioning, with his thoughts, his engins, in the night, digge a pit, as the *Scripture phrase is*, and dig deepe to hide his counsell, to blow him up in the end, and so as hee shall not know who hurt him; and this is worse than all the former, this studied artificiall villanie. The more devising there is in sinne, the worse: therefore the fact about *Vriah*, not so much that of *Bathsheba*,

E

is

is objected against *David*, because he used art in it; hee tooke thought for it, but in the matter of *Bathsheba*, thoughts tooke him.

Fiftly, the fifth is the *representing* or acting over *finnes*, in our thoughts and imaginations, personating those pleasures by imagination, which at present wee enjoy not really, faining and imagining our selves to act those sinfull practises wee have not opportunity outwardly to performe: *speculative wickednesse* Divines doe call it, which to be in the power of imagination to doe, is evident to you by your dreames; when

when fancie playes its part
most, and to allude to
what the Prophet sayes,
makes us beleeve *we eat*
when we are an hungry, to
drinke when our soules are
thirsty, 1say 29. 8. But I
meane not to speak of the
power and corruption of
it, as in our dreames: it
were well if, as the Apo-
stle speakes of *Drunken-*
nes, that this speculative
wickednesse were onely
in the night. But corrupt
and distempered affecti-
ons doe cast men into such
dreames in the day, and
when they are awake,
there are then (to borrow
the Apostles expression)
filty dreames, Jude 8.
that defile the flesh, even

when awake : when, their
lusts wanting worke, their
fancie erects to them a
stage, and they set their
imaginations and thoughts
a worke to entertaine their
filthy and impure desires,
with shewes and playes of
their owne making, and so
reason and the intention of
their mindes, sit as specta-
tours all the while to view
with pleasure, till their
thoughts inwardly act o-
ver their owne uncleane
desires, ambitious pro-
jects, or what ever else
they have a minde unto.

So *vaine* and empty is
the heart of man become,
so *impatient* are our desires
and lusts of interruption
in their pleasures, so sin-
full

full and corrupt.

First, vaine and empty it appeares to be in this; for take all the pleasures of sinne, when they are never so fully, solidly, really, and substantially enjoyed, they are but shadows, a meere outside and figure, as the Apostle calls the world. It is opinion of imagination that casts that varnish of goodnesse on them, which is not truly in them. So *Felix* and *Bernices* pompe is termed πολυπαντασία; but now this speculative enjoying of them onely in imagination, (which many mens hearts take so much pleasure in,) the pleasing our selves in the bare
E 3 thoughts

thoughts and imaginati-
ons of them, this is but a
shadow of these shadows,
that the soul should *Ixiom*-
like embrace and commit
adultery with clouds one-
ly; this is a *vanitie* be-
yond all other vanities,
that maketh us vainer than
other creatures, who,
though *subject to vanity*,
yet not to such as this.

Secondly, it argues our
desires to be impatient, to
bee detained from, or in-
terrupted of their plea-
sures. When the soule
shall bee found so greedy,
that when the heart is de-
barred or sequestred from
those things it desires, and
wants meanes or opportu-
nities to act its lusts, as not
being

being to stay, it will at least enjoy them in imagination, and in the *interim*, set fancie to entertaine the minde with empty pictures of them drawne in its owne thoughts.

3. Thus they appeare also to bee exceeding sinfull and corrupt; an *outward* act of Sinne, it is but as an act of *whoredome* with the creature, when *really* enjoyed: But this is *Incest*, when we defile our soules and spirits with these imaginations and likenesses which are begotten in our own fancies, being the children of our owne hearts.

And yet (my brethren)
such speculative enjoying

of pleasures, and acting over of sinnes the minde of man is full of, as will appear in many particulars.

First, looke what comforts men have *at present* in their possession, and at command, what *excellencies* or endowments men love to be alone to study, and thinke of them, and when they are sequestred from the present use of them, yet they will then bee againe and againe recounting and casting of them up, taking a survey of their happines in them, applauding their owne hearts in their conditions. And as rich men, that love money, love to be looking
on

on it, and telling it over ;
so do men to be summing
up their comforts and pri-
viledges they enjoy ,
which others want ; as,
how rich they are , how
great, how they excell o-
thers in parts and gifts,
&c. Oh how much of that
pretious sand of our
thoughts runne out this
way ! Thus he in the Go-
spell, he keepes an audit
in his heart ; *Soule* (saith
he) *thou hast goods laid up
for many yeares.* So *Ha-*
man. *Ester 5. 11,* takes an
Inventory of his honours
and goods, he talkes of *all*
the glory of his riches, and
all the things wherein the
King had promoted him.
So Nebuchadnezzar, Dan.

4.30. as it may sceme, he was alone walking and talking to himselfe, like a foole, saying to himselfe ; *Is not this the great Babel which I have built by the might of my power, for the glory of my Majesty.*

And as thus upon their comforts, so also upon their excellencies, as their learning, wisdom, parts, &c. Men love to stand looking upon these in the glasse of their owne speculation , as faire faces love to looke often and long in Looking-glasses, which, as it ariseth from that self-flattery is in men ; so also that they might keepe their happinesse

nesse still fresh and continued in their eye; which thoughts, when they raise not up the heart to thankfulness to God, and are not used to that end, but are bellows of pride; they are vaine and abominable in the eyes of God, as appears by Gods dealing with those fore-mentioned; for to the one hee sayes, *Thou fool, this night;* the other *whilst the word was in his mouth,* (giving him no longer warning) hee strikes with madness and brutishnesse: and *Haman*, you know, was like a *Wall* that doth swell before it *breakes*, and falls to ruine and decay.

Secondly, *this speculative*

tive enjoying of pleasures,
and acting over sinnes thus
in fancy, doth appeare in
regard of *things to come*;
which when wee have in
view, or any hopes of
mens thoughts goe forth
afore to meet them, with
how much contentment
doe mens thoughts enter-
taine their desires, with
vaine promifings and ex-
pectations aforehand of
their pleasures, that are in
view and in possibility to
bee enjoyed. So they in
Eſay wind up their hearts
to a higher pin of jollity
in the miſt of their cups,
in that their hearts
thought and promiſed
them, *To morrow ſhall bee
as to day, and much more
abun-*

abundant, *I say* 56. 12. So they, *Iames* 4. 13, they say with themselves, *Wee will goe to such a City, and continu there a yeare, and get gaine.* And the promise of this, and the thoughts of it aforehand feeds them, and keepes up their hearts in comfort. When men rise in a morning, they begin to forethinke with much pleasure, what carnall pleasures they have the aduouision and promise of that day or weeke, as to goe to such company, and therebee merry; to goe such a pleasant journey, enjoy satisfaction in such a lust, heare such newes, &c. And thus as godly
men

men live by faith in Gods promises, *Hab. 2.4. Isay 38. 16. By these men live, and this is the spirit of my life, saith Hezekiah, even what God hath spoken, vers. 15.* So doe carnall men live much upon the promises of their own hearts and thoughts aforehand (for to this head of vaine thoughts, these *vaine promissings* are to be reduced, *Psalms. 49. 11. Their inward thought is, their houses shall continue for ever, and this thought pleaseth them: what pleasure almost is there, which a man makes much account of, but he acts it first over in private in his owne thoughts? and thus doe* men

men foolishly take their
their owne words and
promises, and so *befoole*
themselves in the end, as
Jeremy speakes, *Ier.* 17.
They take up before hand
in their thoughts upon
trust, the pleasures they
are to enjoy, even as
spend-thrifts doe their
rents, or Heires their re-
venews before they come
of age to enjoy their
lands, that when they
come indeed to enjoy the
pleasures they expected,
either they prove but
dreames, as *Isay* 29. 6.
they finde their *soules*
empty, or so much under
their expectation, and so
stale, as they have little in
them, that there still
proves

proves more in the imagination than in the thing, which ariseth from the vastnesse and greedines of mens desires, as the cause hereof; for that makes them swallow up all at once. So *Hab. 2. Enlarging his desires as Hell, hee heapes up all Nations, swallows them up in his thoughts.* So an ambitious Scholler doth all preferments that are in his view.

Thirdly, this *speculative wickednesse* is exercised in like maner towards *things past*, in recalling namely, and reviving in our thoughts the pleasure of sinfull actions passed; when the minde runnes
over

over the passages and circumstances of the same sins long since committed, with a new and fresh delight; when men raise up their dead actions long since buried, in the same likenesse they were transacted in, and parley with them, as the Witch & Saul did with Satan in *Samuels* likenesse. And whereas they should draw crosse lines over them, and blot them out through faith in Christs blood, they rather copy and write them over againe in their thoughts, with the same contentment. So an unclean person can study and view over every circumstance passed in such an

an act, with such a person committed; so a vaine-glorious Scholler doth re-
peate in his thoughts an eminent performance of his, and all such passages therein as were most elegant. And thus men chew the cudd upon any speech of commendation uttered by others of them. And all this even as a good heart doth repeate good things heard or read, with the remembrance also of what quicknesse they had in such and such passages, and with what affections they were warmed, when they heard them; or as a godly man recalls with comfort the actions of a well-past life, as *Heze-
chiab*

chiah did, Lord I have walked before thee with a perfect heart, and thereby doe also stir and provoke their hearts to the like temper againe: So on the contrary doe wicked men use to recall, and revive the pleasingest sinfull passages in their lives, to suck a new sweetnesse out of them. Then which nothing argues more *hardnes* and *wickednesse* of heart, or provokes God more. For

First, it argues much *wickednesse* of heart, and such as when it is ordinary with the heart to do thus, is not compatible with grace: for in the 6. of the *Romans*, ver. 12. the Apostle shews that a good heart

heart useth to reape no such fruit of sinfull actions past, *But what fruit had you of those things whereof yee are now ashamed.* The Saints reape and distill nothing out of all those flowers, but shame and sorrow, and sad sighs: when *Ephraim* remembered his sin, he was *ashamed, and repented*; & canst thou in thy thoughts, reape a new harvest and crop of pleasure out of them, againe and againe?

Secondly, it argues much hardnesse of heart; nothing being more opposite to the truth and practise of repentance, the foundation of which is to call to minde the sin with shame

shame and sorrow, and to recall it with much more griefe, than ever there was pleasure in the committing of it: and whose property is to *haze* the *appearance* of it, and to enflame the heart with Zeale and revenge against it. And thereby it provoketh God exceedingly, our hearts are thereby embrued in a new guilt, wee thereby stand to, and make good our former act: even so, by remembering it with pleasure, we provoke God to remember it with a new detestation of it, and so to send downe new plagues; who, if we recall it with griefe, *would remember it no more:*
we

we shew wee take delight
to rake in those wounds
we have given Christ al-
ready; to view *the sins of
others* with pleasure, *Rom.*
1. ult. is made more *than*
to commit them: But much
more to view and revive
our owne with a fresh de-
light: and therefore know
that how-ever you may
take delight here to re-
peat to your selves your
old sins, yet that in Hell
nothing will gall you
more, than the remem-
brance of them; every
circumstance in every sin
will then be as a dagger at
thy heart. This was the
rich mans taske and study
in Hell, to remember the
good things he had recei-
ved,

ved, and his sins committed in the abuse of them. And if godly men here be made to *possesse the sinnes of their youth with horror*, as *Iob*, and to have them ever afore them, as *David*, how will wicked men be continually affrighted with them in hell? whose punishment is in a great part set forth to us, by this *Psalme. 50. 20. I will set them in order before thee.*

Fourthly, the fourth thing wherein this *speculative vanity* appeares, is in acting sinnes upon meere imaginary suppositions men faigne, and contrive to themselves, and make a supposition to themselves in

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ved, and his sins commit-

Faded and
ble in parts.

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in

in their own thoughts, first of what *they would be*, and then what *they would doe*. Men create fooles paradises to themselves, and then walke up and downe in them; as, if they had money enough, what pleasures they would have; if they were in such places of preferment, how they would carry themselves. To allude to that *Absolem* said, 2 *Sam.* 15. 4. *Oh if I were a Iudge in the Land, I would doe this or that, &c.* doing this with a great deal of pleasure, almost as much as those that really enjoy them. This may well be the meaning of that *Psalme* 50. 18. where of the hypocrite (who out-

outwardly abstaines from
grosse sins) 'tis said, that
hee consenteth with the
thiefe, and partaketh with
the adulterer, namely, in
his heart and fancie, sup-
posing himselfe with
them, and so desires to be
doing what they doe.
Thus take one who is na-
turally ambitious (whom
both nature, parts and
education have all made,
but a *Bramble never to*
rule over the trees, and
hath fixt in a lower
sphere, as uncapable of
rising higher or being
greater, as the earth is of
becomming a Starre in
Heaven, yet) he will take
upon him in his owne
heart, faining and suppo-
sing

posing himselfe to be, and then act the part of a great man there, erect a throne, and sit downe in it; and thinkes with himselfe what he would doe, if a King or a great Man, &c. So take a man that is uncleane, but now grown old, and a *dry tree*, and so cannot act his lust as formerly, yet his thoughts shall supply what is wanting in his strength or opportunity. And he makes his owne heart both Bawd, Brothel-house, Whore, Whoremonger, and all: so a man that is naturally voluptuous, loves pleasures, but wants meanes to purchase them, yet his inclinations will please

please themselves with the thoughts of what mixture and composition of delights hee would have; hee will set downe with himselfe his bill of fare, how he would have, if he might with his cup of pleasure mingled, what ingredients put into it. So a man that is revengefull, and yet wants a sting, yet he pleaseth himselfe with revengefull thoughts and wishes, and will be making invectives and rayling dialogues against him, hee hates, when he is not by. A man in love, in his fancy he will court his Paramour though absent, hee will by his imagination make her present, and so

frame solemn set speeches to her.

In a word, let mens inclinations and dispositions be of what kinde so ever, and let the impossibilities and improbabilities be never so great of being what they desire; yet in their fancies and thoughts they will discover themselves what they would be. *Totumque quod esse desiderant sibi apud semetipsos cogitationibus depingunt*, men will be drawing Maps of their desires, calculate their owne inclinations, cut out a condition of life which fills their hearts, and they please themselves withall; and there is no surer way to know a mans

mans naturall inclination,
than by this.

First, which yet first is
as great a folly as any o-
ther, imitating children
herein; for is it not chil-
dish to make clay pies, and
puppets? what else are
such fancies as these? and
to bee as children acting
the parts of Ladies and
Mistresses, and yet such
childishnesse is in mens
hearts.

2. And secondly, a
vanitie also, because a
man sets his heart on
what is not: the things
themselves are not, if a
man had them, *Prov.*
23. 5. but to please
themselves with supposi-
tions is much worse.

Thirdly, this argues the greatest incontentation of minde that may bee, when men will in their owne thoughts put themselves into another condition than God ever ordained for them.



Vse 1.

HAVING discovered the vanity of your thoughts and your estates thereby, bee humbled for them; This I ground upon, *Proverbs 30. 21.* where *Agur* teacheth us to humble our selves as well for thoughts as actions.

actions. If thou hast done foolishly in lifting up thy selfe, or if thou hast thought evill, lay thine hand upon thy mouth. Now as smiting upon the thigh is put for repentance and shame and sorrow in Ephraim, Ierem. 31. 19. so is laying the hand upon the mouth put for greater and deeper humiliation, as arguing full conviction of ones guilt, Romans 3. 19. Every mouth must be stopped. Having nothing to say, not to plead and excuse that thoughts are free, and it is impossible to bee rid of them, &c. but as Ezechiel 16. 65. To remember and so

be confounded, and never
to open thy mouth more!
to bee vile, and not to an-
swere againe: as Job 39.
27, 28. this is to lay thy
hand on thy mouth,
that is, to humble thy
selfe.

And indeed there is
much cause, for your
thoughts they are the
first begotten, and eldest
sonnes of originall sinne,
and therefore *the strength*
of it, as *Iacob* called
Reuben the first-borne;
yea also, and the *Parents*
and begetters of all o-
ther sins, their *brethren*;
The first plotters and
contrivers, and *Achi-*
tophels, in all the trea-
sons and rebellions of
our

our hearts and lives; the bellows and incendiaries of all inordinate affections; the Panders to all our lusts, that *take thought* to provide for the satisfying of them; the disturbers in all good duties, that interrupt and spoile and fly-blow all our prayers, that they stinke in the nostrils of God.

And if their hainousnesse will nothing move you, consider their number, for they are continually thus: which makes our finnes to be in number more than the sands: the thoughts of *Solomons* heart were as the Sand, and so ours; not a minute;

but as many thoughts passe from us, as in a minute sands doe in an Houre-glasse. So that suppose, that taken severally, they bee the smallest and least of your sinnes, yet their multitude makes them more and heavier than all your other. Nothing smaller than a graine of *Sand*, but if there bee a heape of them, there is nothing heavier, *Iob 6. 3. My griefe is heavier than the Sand.* Suppose they bee in themselves, but as Farthing-tokens, in comparison of grosse defilements: yet because the Mint never lies still, sleeping nor waking, therefore

fore they make up the greatest part of that treasure of wrath which we are a laying up : and know that God will reckon every Farthing, and in thy punishment bate thee not one vaine thought. And that God lookes upon our thoughts thus, see but the inditement hee brings in against the old world, which stands still upon record, *Genes. 6.* when he pronounced that hea- vie judgement of destroying the old world, doth hee alledge their murthers, adulteries, and grosse defilements chiefly as the cause? Their *thoughts* rather; which be-

because so many, and so continually evil, provoked him more than all their other finnes. Goe downe therefore into the heart, and consider them well, to humble thee, to make thee vile, and if in one roome such a treasure of wickednesse bee found laid up, what in all those other *Chambers of the belly*, as *Solomon* calls them: consider them to humble thee, but not for all this their multitude to discourage thee. For God hath more *thoughts of mercy* in him, than thou hast had of rebellion, *Psalm* 40. 5. *Thy thoughts to us-ward,* (speaking of thoughts of mer-

mercy) are more than can
bee numbred. Thou be-
gannest but as yesterday
to thinke thoughts of
rebellion against him,
but his thoughts of mer-
cy have been from ever-
lasting, and reach to ever-
lasting: and therefore in
Esay 55.v.7. having made
mention of our thoughts,
let the unrighteous man
forsake his thoughts, and
hee will have mercy on
him; because this ob-
jection of the multitude
might come in to dis-
courage men from hopes
of mercy; therefore pur-
posely he addes, he will
multiply to pardon; and
to assure us that he hath
thoughts of mercy to
out-

out-vye ours of sinne,
he addes, *for my thoughts*
exceed yours, as Heaven
doth the earth.



Vse 2.

LEt us make for ever
conscience of them,
so *Iob* did, *Iob 31. 1.* I
made a covenant with
mine eyes, why should
I thinke upon a Maide?
Solomon gives in espe-
ciall charge; *above all kee-*
ping, keepe thy heart,
Prov. 4. 23.

First, thou art to keep
the Lords day holy, thy
selfe unspotted of the
World.

World. To keepe thy brother, to keepe all the commandements, but above all to keepe thy heart, and in it thy thoughts; for this is the Great Commandement, because it extends it selfe (as the foundation) unto them all: for as in the same Commandement where murther is forbidden, a malicious thought is also, and so of the rest; So in keeping the thoughts, thou virtually keepest all the Commandements: as originall sinne is said to bee forbidden in all the Commandements, so are thy thoughts taken order for in all.

Se-

Secondly, out of it are issues of life; thoughts and affections are the spring, speeches and actions the streame: as are our thoughts, so are our affections; for these are the bellows, so also our prayers, so all, for they are in the soule as the spirits in the body, they runne through all, move all, act all.

Thirdly, if you looke to God, our thoughts are that spot of ground, which hee proclaimes himselfe sole Lord of, and makes it one of his greatest titles, that hee *knowes them*, and *judgeth them*. Kings attempt to rule your tongues, to binde

binde your hands, and
rule your actions; but
God only your thoughts.
By them we chiefly san-
ctifie him in our hearts,
by them wee walke with
God, and shall wee not
make conscience of
them?

Fourthly, if you look
to the worke and power
of grace, wherein lies it,
But in bringing every
thought into obedience?
2 Corin. 11. 4. This is
the glory of our religi-
on above all other in the
world: wherein lies the
difficulty of it, the strict-
nesse of it, what makes
it so hard a taske? but
the observing and keep-
ing the thoughts in
bounds,

bounds : wherein lyes the difference betweene sincere hearted Christians and others ? but the keeping of our thoughts, without which all Religion is but *bodily exercise*. Papists may mumble over their prayers, hypocrits talke, but this is *Godlinesse*.

Fiftly, if wee looke to things wee have a care of; if wee have a care of speeches, because Christ *hath said, we shall answere for every idle word*; why not also for the same reason, should wee have a care of thoughts ? which are the *words of the minde*, onely they want a shape,

to be audible to others, which the tongue gives them, for which you must answer as well as for words, *Hebrews* 4. 12. *1 Cor.* 4. 5. If you be carefull what companions you have, and whom you lodge in your houses, and who lye in your bosomes, then much more of your thoughts, which lodge in your hearts, which are not yours, but Gods houses; built for himself, and for Christ and *his Word to dwell in*: seeing also the things you thinke of have the most neare intimate fellowship and converse with you. And therefore when you
thinke

thinke of the Word, it is said to *talke with you*, *Proverbs 6*. If you bee carefull of what you eat, because such bloud you have, &c. then be carefull what you thinke, thoughts being *Pabulum anima*, as *Tully* calls them. *Thy words did [I eat]* sayes *Ieremiah*, speaking of meditating on it.

Sixthly, if you looke to the issue of things: what shall bee the subject of that great inquest at the Day of Judgement: the *thoughts and counsels*, *1 Corin. 4. 5*. And after the Day of judgement, mens thoughts shall prove their greatest executioners: what are the

the cords God lashes
 you with to all eternity,
 your owne thoughts;
thoughts accusing, where-
 by you study over every
 sinne; and every one will
 bee as a dagger, *Isay 33.*
18. the *Hypocrites* tor-
 ment, is to meditate ter-
 rours, to study Gods
 wrath, and the Saints
 blessednesse, and their
 owne finnes and misc-
 ry.

Remem-



*Remedies against vaine
Thoughts.*

THe first is to get the heart furnished and enriched with a good stock of sanctified and heavenly knowledge in spirituall and heavenly truths : *For a good man (saith Christ) hath a good treasure in his Heart, Mat. 13. 35.* that is, he hath all graces, so many precious truths which are as Gold in the Ore, which his thoughts, as the Mint, doth coyne and beat out, and which words bring forth

forth. A good man, out of the good treasure of his heart, brings forth good things. If therefore there bee not Mines of pretious truths hid in the heart, no wonder if our thoughts coyne nothing but drosse, frothy vaine thoughts, for want of better materials which should feed the Mint, are wanting. Therefore *Salomon* saith, *Wicked men forge, mint, or hammer wickednesse*, *Proverbs 6. 14.* so *Iustin* reads it: or if men have store of naturall knowledge, and want spirituall usefull knowledge to themselves; although in company with others, they
on may

may bring forth good things in speeches, yet when alone, their thoughts runne not on them. For this, take a place of Scripture, *Deut. 6. 6, 7.* which shewes, that laying up the Word in the heart, and being much conversant in it, and getting knowledge out of it, is an effectuall meanes to keepe our thoughts well exercised when wee are alone: for the end why these words are commanded *to be laid up in the heart, verse 5, 6.* is, as to teach them to others, so, to take up our thoughts when wee are most retired, and alone, and when a man can do

nothing, but barely exercise his mind, in thinking; for when a man is a *riding*, or *walking*, or *lying downe*, and rising up, (which are often and usually our most retired times for thoughts, and are wholly spent in them, for many ride alone, and lye alone, &c.) yet then, saith he, thou shalt *talke of the Word*: which command hee that is alone cannot doe; therefore the *talking* there ment is not onely *by* ~~the~~ *outward conference* with others, (though intended) as to talke to thy bedfellow of it, and to thy companion: but suppose thou hast none,

G then

then to talke of it to thy selfe, for thoughts are λόγος ἐνδεδότος, talking of the minde; and so comparing, Proverbs 6. 22. with this place (which will fitly interpret it) it appeares; for Solomon exhorting to the same duty of Binding the Word to the heart, useth this motive, which is the fruit thereof, *That when thou awakest, it shall talke with thee*, that is, by thy thinking of it, it will talke with thee when thou and it art alone: So as thou shalt not need a better companion, it will bee putting in and suggesting some thing.

Secondly, endeavour
to

to preserve and keepe up
lively, holy, and spiri-
tuall affections in thy
heart, and suffer them
not to coole; *Fall not
from thy first love*, nor
feare, nor joy in God;
or if thou hast growne
remisse, endeavour to
recover those affections
again. For such as your
affections are, such ne-
cessarily must your
thoughts bee: and they
encline the minde to
thinke of such or such
objects as will please
them, rather than others;
therefore sayes David,
*Psalm 119. 97. How do
I love thy Law! it is my
Meditation day and night.*
It was his love to it

made him thinke of it
so frequently. So *Ma-
lasy* 3. 16. *Those that
feared the Lord, and
thought upon his name,* are
joyned: For what wee
feare wee often thinke
of, and also speake of
often; therefore it is
added; *They spake of one
to another; feare made
them thinke much of his
name,* and thinking of it
made *them speake of it:*
such affection, such
thoughts, & such speeches,
as they both are. And in-
deed thoughts and affecti-
ons are *Sibi mutuo cause,*
the mutuall causes of each
other: *Whilist I mused,
the fire burned,* *Psalme*
39, so that thoughts are
the

the bellowes that kindle
and enflame affections :
and then if they are en-
flamed , they cause
thoughts to boyle, there-
fore men newly conver-
ted to God , having new
and strong affections ,
can with more pleasure
thinke of God *than any.*

Thirdly , of all ap-
prehensions else , get thy
heart possessed with
deepe , strong and pow-
erfull apprehensions and
impressions of Gods Holi-
nesse ; Majestie , Omni-
presence , and Omnisci-
ence. If any thoughts
bee of power to settle ,
fixe , and draw in the
minde of man , they are
the *thoughts of him.*

What is the reason that the Saints and Angels in Heaven have not a vaine thought to eternitie, not a wry stroke, his presence fixeth them, their eye is never off him? Take a wanton garish loose spirit, let him bee but in the presence of a Superior whom hee feares and reverenceth, and it consolidates him. *Iob* made therefore conscience of his thoughts, that hee durst not looke awry, *Iob* 31. 1, 2. because God sees it, saith hee. This drew in and fastened *Dauids* thoughts, *Psalme* 139. from the first to the twelfth, hee mani-

manifests what continuall apprehension hee had of Gods Greatnesse, Majesty, and Omnipresence; and what effect had this? *When I awake I am even before thee, verse 17.* Looke what objects they are, have most strong and deepe impressions in the mind, of those when a man awaketh, hee thinkes of first. Now such strong impressions had *Dauids* thoughts of God, that still when hee awaked, hee was with him, and therefore we finde it by experience to bee a meanes to avoid distractions in prayers, to enlarge a mans thoughts

in his preparations before, or at the beginning with a consideration of Gods attributes and relations to us: and ~~it~~ will and doth make us serious.

Fourthly, especially doe this when thou *awakest*, as *David* did there, *when I awake* I am still with thee, to prevent winde which ariseth from emptinesse men use to take a good draught in the morning, which the stomack feeds; so to prevent those vaine, windy, frothy thoughts the heart naturally ingenders, and which arise from emptinesse; first fill thy heart

heart with the thoughts of God; *Goe downe into his Wine-celler*: observe it when you will, when you first open your eyes, there stand many suitors attending on you, to speake with your thoughts, even as clients at Lawyers dores, many vanities and businesses; but speake thou with God first, hee will say something to thy heart, will settle it for all day: and this doe before the croud of businesses come in upon thee. Of some Heathens it is said that they worship *that* as their God, for all day, which they first see in the morning;

so it is with the idols of mens hearts.

Fiftly , have a watchfull eye , and observe thy heart all day , though they croud in , yet observe them , let them know that they passe not unscene ; if a man would pray aright , hee must watch also , who comes in , and who goes out : where strict watch and ward is kept , and Magistrates observant , the Marshall and Constable diligent to examine vagrant persons , you shall have few there ; that such swarmes of vagrant thoughts make their rendevouz , and passe , is because there
is

is not strict watch kept.

This is in a manner all thou canst doe, for they will passe however, but yet complaine thou of them, whip them, and give them their passe.

Sixtly, please not thy fancy too much with vanities and curious sights, this engenders vaine thoughts; therefore *Iob* sayes, *chap. 31. vers. 1. That hee made a covenant with his eyes, lest hee should thinke of a Maide*, *Proverbs 4. 25. Let thine eyes looke right on.*

Seventhly, bee diligent in thy calling, and what thine hand findes to doe,

doe, doe it with all thy
 might, as it is, Ecclesi-
 astes 9. 10. that is, put-
 ting to all the intention
 and strength of the mind
 that may bee in it. Let
 all the streame runne to
 turne about thy Mill,
 the keeping thy thoughts
 to that channell, keeps
 them from overflowing
 into vanity and folly,
 2 Thes. 3. 11. Those that
 labour not are busie bodies.
 And 1 Tim. 5. 13. Idle,
 wandring, ~~and idle~~, they
 are not onely called ~~idle~~,
 Idle onely, because not
 busie about what they
 should, but ~~as idle~~ as in-
 tent on things they
 should not; they goe
 from house to house:
 fo

fo their bodies doe, because their mindes doe wander, having no center. When *David* walked alone, what extravagancie did his spirit runne into? let the ground lye fallow, and what weeds will there soone grow in it? God hath appointed us our callings to entertaine our thoughts, and to finde them work, and to hold them doing in the *interims*, betweene the duties of his worship, because the spirit and thoughts of men are restlesse, and will bee busied some way; as therefore Kings keepe those men that have active

active spirits in continuall imployment, lest their heads should bee working and plotting amisse : so did God appoint even in Paradise the active spirit of man, a calling to keepe him doing. God hereby hedgeth in mans thoughts, and sets them to go in a narrow lane, knowing that if they are unconfined and left at liberty, they would like wilde *Asses* *snuffe up the winde*, as *Jeremy* speaks, *Jeremy* 2. 24. onely take heed of encumbring thy minde with too much businesse, more than thou canst graspe. It made *Martha* forget that *one thing*
ne.

necessary, being *enmbred*
with many things, *Luke*
10. 4. this breeds care
μεριμναί, which distracts the
 minde, (so the word sig-
 nifies *ἀνὰ τὴν μερίμνην*, as *di-*
viding it, and so cau-
 seth wandring thoughts
 nothing more, so that
 the minde is not it selfe.
 For this weakens it, e-
 nervates it, and this be-
 ing vanity, *Exodus 18.*
18. said *Iethro* to *Mo-*
ses, when encombred
 with businesse, *Thou wilt*
fade away as a leafe, out
 of which the moisture is
 dryed up, even that joyce
 which should be left for
 good duties will bee ex-
 hausted, as dreames come
 through multitude of bu-
 sinesse,

finesse, Eccles. 5. 3. so do
a multitude of thoughts
from a cumber of busi-
nesse.

Eighthly, in thy cal-
ling, and all thy wayes,
for the successe and thy
wayes therein, *Commit thy
wayes to God, Prov. 16. 3.*
*Commit thy way unto the
Lord, and thy thoughts shall
be established, or ordered:*
that is, kept from that
confusion and disorder,
and those swarmes of
cares, which others are
annoyed with: and there-
by thy aimes may bee as
well accomplished: a few
thoughts of faith would
save us many thoughts of
cares and feares, in the bu-
sinesses we goe about,
which

which prove therefore
vaine ; because they for-
ward not at all the busi-
nesse we intend. When
such waves tosse the heart
and turmoile it, and the
windes of passions are up,
if a few thoughts of
faith come into the
heart, they calm
all presently.

F I N I S.

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which prove themselves
to be, because they do
with not at all the full
cells we intended. When
left was a rather large
and made it, and the
series of the series up
it a few things of
such into the



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rep
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*Perlegi hunc tractatum,
cui titulus est (The vanity
of thoughts) in quo nihil
reperio, quo minus impri-
matur.*

*Rever. in Ch. Patri
& D^{no} D. Ar. Cant.
Sac. Dom.*

*Ex Ad. Lamb.
Iul. I. 1637.*

IOH. OLIVER.

1. The first of these is the fact that the
 2. second of these is the fact that the
 3. third of these is the fact that the
 4. fourth of these is the fact that the
 5. fifth of these is the fact that the
 6. sixth of these is the fact that the
 7. seventh of these is the fact that the
 8. eighth of these is the fact that the
 9. ninth of these is the fact that the
 10. tenth of these is the fact that the



Don I. b. 12 x 3

1837.

JOHN OLIVER

